(b) if so, the details of the recommendations made by the Law Commission in its 177th Report; and

(c) the action contemplated by Government on the recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and it will be laid on the Table of the House.

Sexual harassment cases

591. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to speed up the hearing of sexual harassment cases;

(b) if so, Government's plan keeping in view the public mind; and

(c) by when such an Act is likely to be introduced in the Parliament?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (c) Both the Government and the Judiciary are concerned with the quick disposal of pending cases including cases of sexual harassment.

The National Commission for Women has formulated a Code of Conduct for work place in the year 1998 putting down the Supreme Court guidelines in a simple manner and circulated it widely amongst all Government/Public Sector Organisation/State Women Commission to enable it to percolate to the lowest functionaries. The Commission has also instituted a series of interactive meetings with Public Sector Undertakings/Banks/Universities/Educational Institutions/Hotels/Media etc. to assess the extent of implementation of the guidelines.

The National Commission for Women is in the process of drafting a Bill on Sexual Harassment of Women at their Workplace.

High Court Bench at Thiruvananthapuram

592. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of States in the country which are not having High Court in its State Capital;

(b) whether the Government of Kerala formally requested to sanction the High Court Bench at Thiruvananthapuram;

(c) whether Government have taken any decision and accorded sanction in the matter;

(d) whether Government are aware of the present stage of setting up of High Court Bench at Thiruvananthapuram; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) Bhopal, Bhubaneswar, Gandhinagar and Thiruvananthapuram are the state capitals in the country, where,at present, there is no High Court or its bench. None of the capitals of Union Territories except Delhi has a High court or its bench located thereat.

(b) to (e) No complete proposal has been received from the Government of Kerala for setting up a Bench of the High Court at Thiruvananthapuram, in consultation with the Chief Justice of that High Court. As such, it is not possible for the Central Government to take any action in the matter.

FDI in Shipping Industry

593. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government have allowed 100 per cent FDI through automatic route in the shipping sector during the last year; and

(b) if so, the details of the investment that the shipping industry received till now?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIP KUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government has so far approved Foreign Direct Investment to the tune of Rs. 468.40 crores in the shipping industry from 22 countries during the period August, 1991 to December, 2002.

Helpline for Older Persons

594. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state: